

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2255
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ALL OTHER CANADIAN POSTS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJ: JAN 26 TRUDEAU PRESS CONFERENCE: QUEBEC & LEVESQUE
SPEECH

1. FOLLOWING ARE MAIN POINTS MADE BY PM TRUDEAU
ON QUEBEC AND PREMIER LEVESQUE'S NEW YORK SPEECH
DURING JAN 26 PRESS CONFERENCE.

2. IT IS REGRETTABLE LEVESQUE SPEECH MIGHT HAVE
SCARED OFF SOME US INVESTORS. GOC WOULD LIKE TO SEE
CONTINUED FOREIGN INVESTMENT BOTH IN QUEBEC AND IN
REST OF CANADA. ANY FEARS OF FINANCIERS ARE UN-
WARRANTED SINCE "SEPARATISM IS NOT GOING TO TAKE
PLACE."

3. LEVESQUE'S CLAIMS THAT HE WAS ELECTED TO LEAD QUEBEC TO
INDEPENDENCE ARE FALSE. HE WAS NOT ELECTED ON THAT
BASIS. LEVESQUE SAID NOTHING IN HIS SPEECH TO INDI-
CATE INDEPENDENCE WOULD BRING; THE GOOD GOVERNMENT
AND THE SOUND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS ABOUT WHICH HE
TALKS. LEVESQUE WOULD BE WISER TO CONCEN-
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TRATE MORE ON THESE MATTERS THAN ON INDEPENDENCE.

4. THE PARTI QUEBECOIS' (PQ) RECENT OPTING OUT
OF ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM AND FEDERAL GRANTS FOR
IMMIGRANT ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING HAVE NOT
HELPED LEVESQUE IN HIS EFFORT TO BORROW MONEY AND
HAVE MADE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WARY. "IF SOME

THINGS GO WRONG, SUCH AS THE UNILATERAL BREAKING OF AGREEMENTS, I WILL SAY I REGRET IT AND TRY TO BE MORE CAREFUL IN THE FUTURE WHEN WE SIGN AGREEMENTS WITH HIM. I DO NOT THINK IT IS A GOOD THING ON HIS PART, IF HE IS TRYING TO BORROW MONEY, TO GIVE AN EXAMPLE THAT HE BREAKS AGREEMENTS THAT EASILY."

5. LEVESQUE SPEECH IN ITSELF SIGNALLED NO CRISIS REQUIRING STRONG FEDERAL STATEMENTS OR MEASURES. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL DISPUTE OF SIX MONTHS AGO WAS, ON OTHER HAND, A CRISIS.

7. FIVE QUEBEC BY-ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN LATE SPRING OR EARLY SUMMER, AND RESULTS WILL CONSTITUTE KIND OF "MINI-REFERENDUM." IF LIBERAL WERE "TO LOSE MASSIVELY" IN THOSE BY-ELECTIONS, IT WOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT QUEBECKERS NO LONGER SUPPORTED FEDERAL LIBERAL PARTY AND ITS POLICIES. IT WOULD ALSO BE A COMMENTARY ON TRUDEAU LEADERSHIP BUT WILL NOT CAUSE HIM TO RESIGN.

8. COMMENT: TRUDEAU DID NOT BREAK ANY SIGNIFICANT NEW GROUND ON THE QUEBEC PROBLEM. HIS PERFORMANCE THEN AND EARLIER IN THE DAY AT COMMONS QUESTION PERIOD DID REVEAL, HOWEVER, A MORE COMBATIVE STANCE TOWARDS LEVESQUE AND THE PQ. TRUDEAU WILL HAVE ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TOMORROW TO STATE HIS POSITION ON SEPARATIST THREAT WHEN HE ADDRESSED CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUEBEC CITY.
ENDERS

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 27-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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